

difficulties to acknowledge that though utility or beneficial tendency may be the proper effect of every virtuous action, yet that it has not necessarily a place in the intention of the actor. It cannot then constitute the distinguishing quality of virtue. It is not so much an attribute of virtue as an effect following from it, through the Divine appointment and arrangement, and an effect following because of the honour which God would put upon virtue.

What quality then, in the mind of the agent may be regarded as constituting moral good? Butler does not answer this question. There are passages in his Treatise on the Nature of Virtue, which show that the subject had been before him: that he knew the question of the nature of virtue to be different from the question of the nature of conscience; but that he did not think it necessary to prosecute the former inquiry. He speaks of himself as not stopping to inquire how far, and in what sense, virtue is resolvable into benevolence, and vice into the want of it.

Hutcheson has given a distinct answer to the question, and defended his theory with his usual acuteness: he represents virtue as consisting in benevolence. But so far as by benevolence he means merely an instinctive attachment springing up independently of the will, we maintain that his theory is erroneous: for in such affection there cannot be anything either virtuous or vicious. Again, if by benevolence is meant simply goodwill to a neighbour, or a desire to promote his happiness, the scheme is all too narrow: for it excludes the love of God, and the holy affections connected with it and springing from it. Nor does it seem possible, without an unreasonable straining and perversion, to include one of the most essential of all the virtues, that of justice, under benevolence understood in any legitimate acceptation.

There are, at least, two essential mental elements in all morally

right action : there is the will, and there is righteousness: there is the will obeying the law addressed to the moral faculty. It is voluntary action, done because it is right. Not only so, there is a third element, arising from the relation in which the law and man stand to God.

FIRST ELEMENT.—We regard the WILL as the seat of all virtue and vice. There is an act of the will wherever there is choice, preference, or resolution—wherever the will has adopted or